

OSX and Disk Maintenance and Repair for average users

This is a brief overview of how to keep your machine healthy as you use it, and repair minor damage as it comes up without professional help.

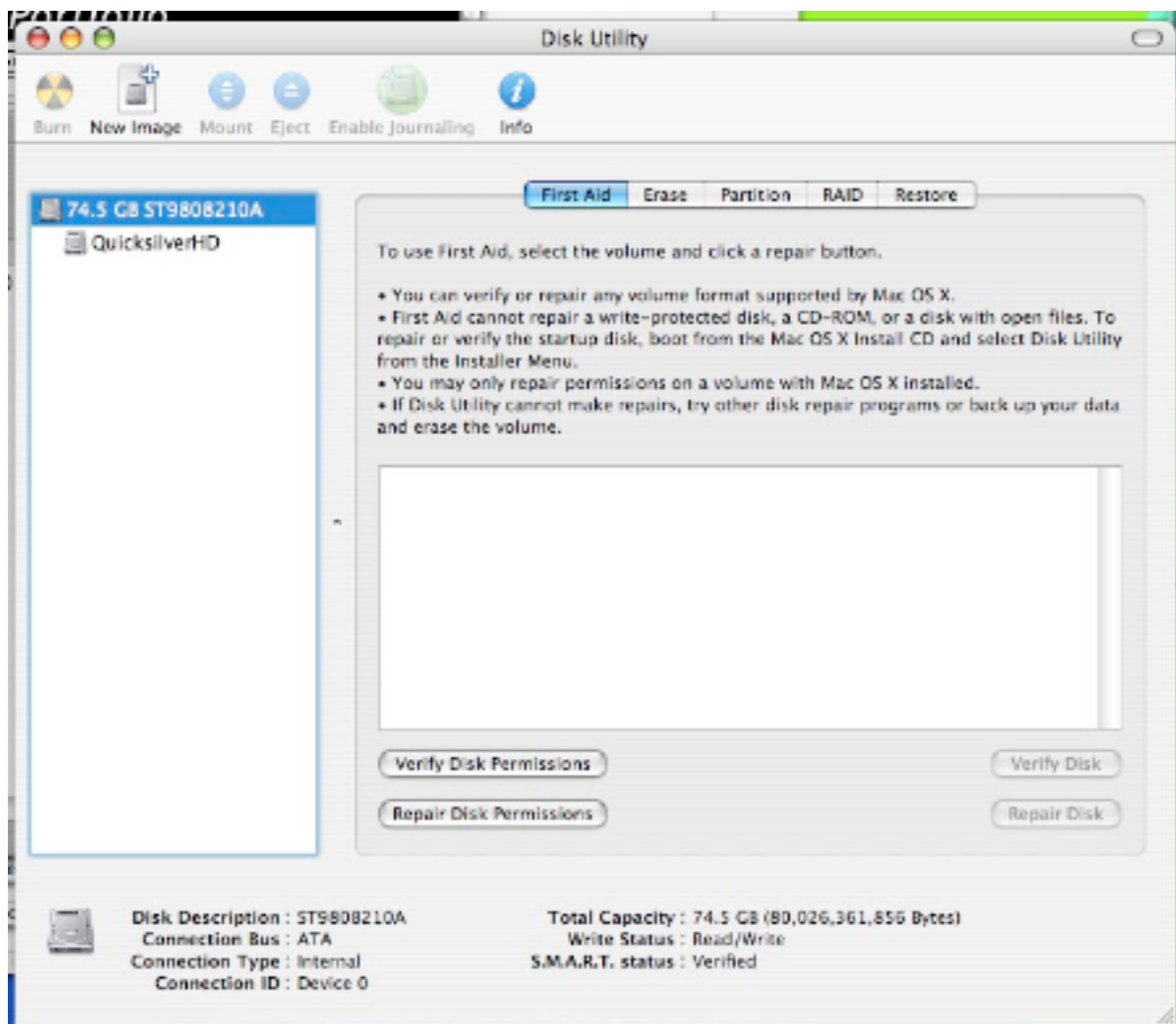
1. Apple's Disk Utility

Inside the Utilities folder of your Applications folder you'll find this tool that ships as part of OS X. In the wrong hands it can be very dangerous so pay VERY CAREFUL ATTENTION should you ever run it.

This application is your primary tool to maintain the health of information on your hard disk drives.

Basically only concern yourself with the tab called FIRST AID.

Click the Tab, then select a drive hooked up to your machine on the left hand side of the application window. You'll notice the name of your drive sits indented from something that looks a bit technical sounding.



click on this thing one step above the name of your drive (called a volume in OS X speak, while the tech named thing is actually the drive on which the volume is based).

Once the tech named drive is selected the features in the **First Aid** tab become active. You can either choose **Fix Permissions** or **Repair Disk**.

Ignore the verify buttons, they won't help you.

Fix Permissions is something you need to do on your boot drive every 2-4 weeks.

Repair Disk is only available to drives you aren't currently booted off. It is helpful to repair second drives or Firewire drives that see a lot of activity. I'd advise giving a Firewire drive the once over every 3 months.

For your boot drive, you'll need to find you OS X disks that came with your machine, and the manual and follow the procedures in it to repair your boot drive (basically booting from the CD, using **Repair Disk** function in **Disk Utility** on the CD to fix your normal boot drive.

If the box shows it can't fix something at the end of the **Repair Disk** session, then you NEED a professional to assist you, or someone with professional knowledge and the right disk repair software.

2. System Optimizer X

This tool is your next weapon to repair things.

One of the things that often happens is that Mac owners shut down their machines at night, and all the automated maintenance scripts that clean things up for you don't get to run because they typically run at midnight. Their are daily, weekly and even monthly scripts.

Thus without them keeping things clean, bad things build up and your machine slows down, and develops other problems. If left too long it can build up to cause permanent damage to OS X which can only be fixed by reinstalling the OS.

Any way if you don't want to leave your machine on in sleep mode overnight, then this application can help. Copy it to your Applications folder.

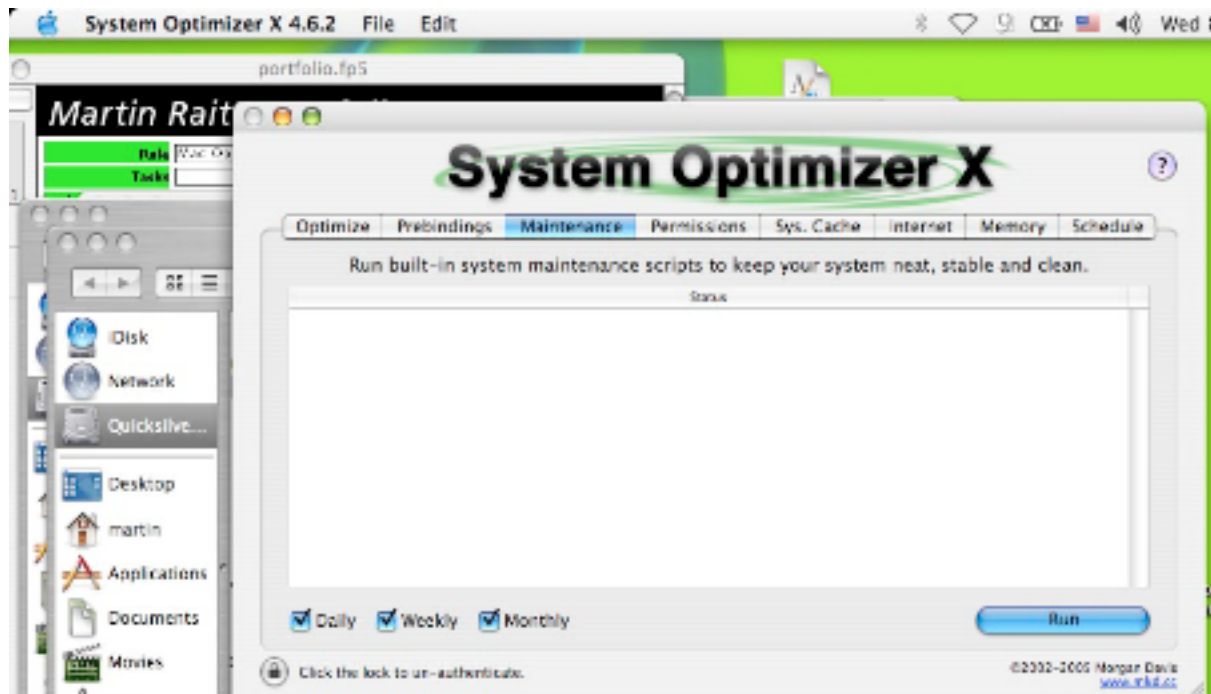
Run it every month (or maybe more if you're a heavy user).

It comes up with a dialog with a timer. Wait till you can click the 'later' button, and it will let you use it without restrictions.

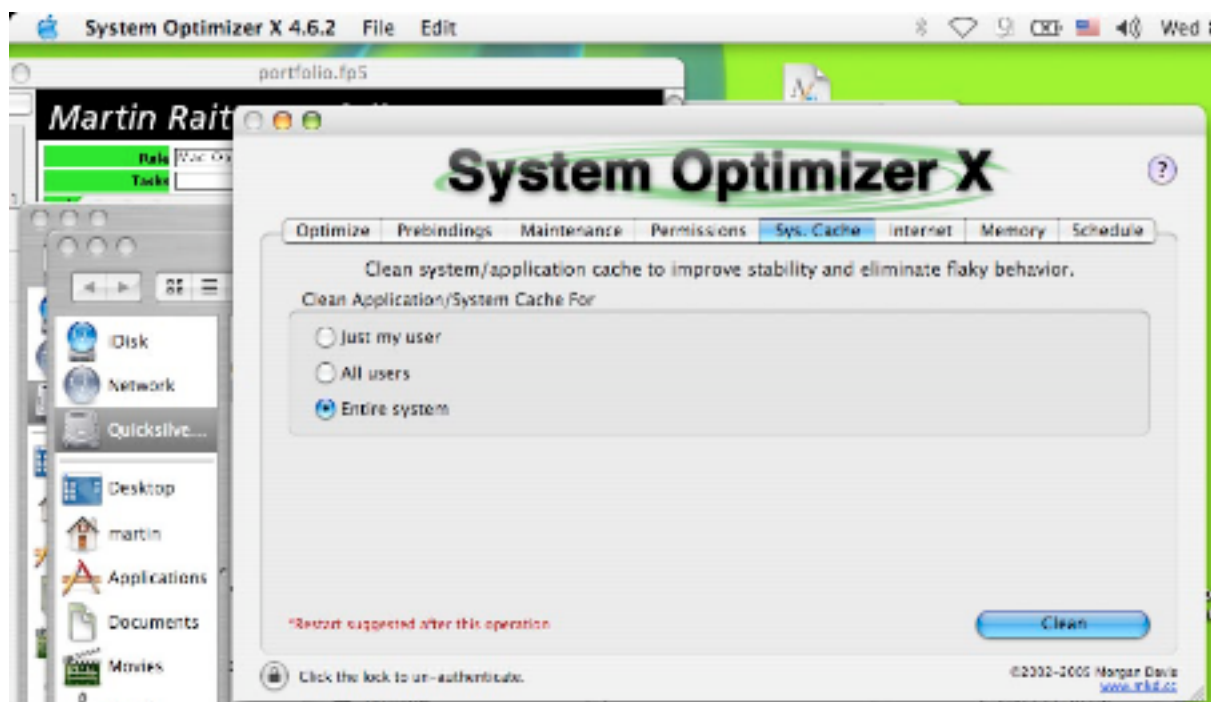


To run some features you will be asked to authenticate your user name and password. Do so if it asks.

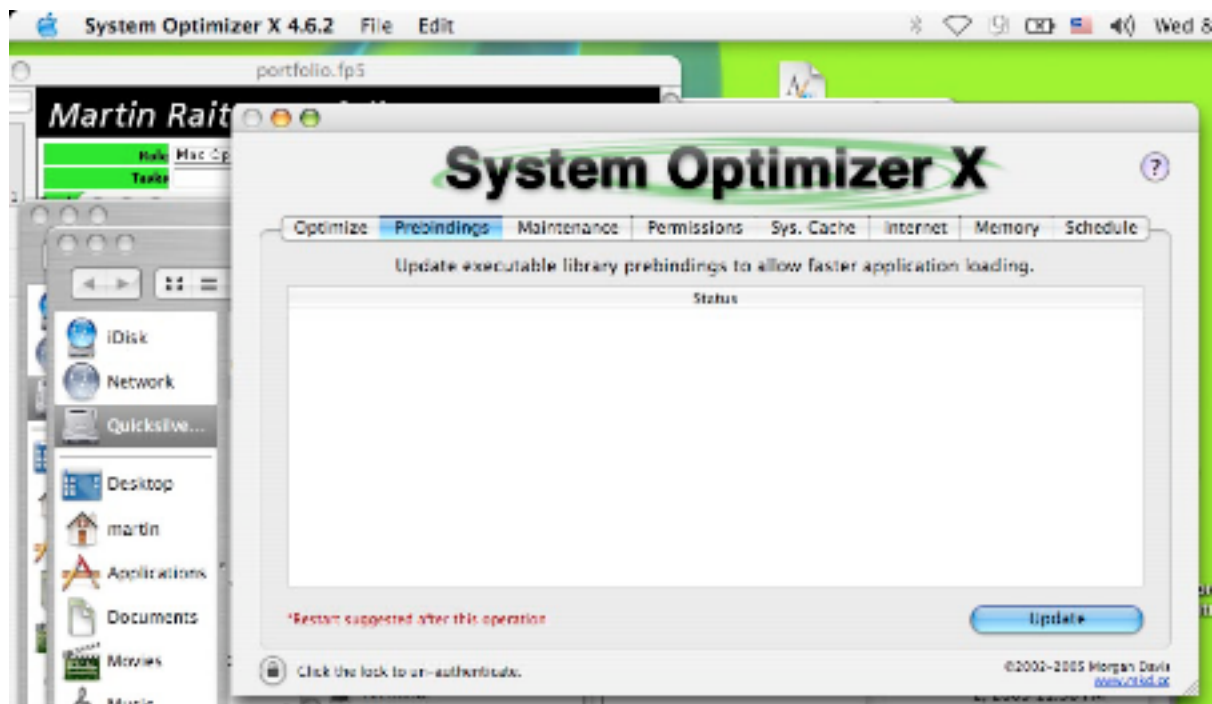
To run the maintenance scripts, click on the **Maintenance** tab, then make sure the **daily**, **weekly** and **monthly** buttons are selected, then click **optimize**. Let it run till the big center box says it's complete. This may take some time.



If your machine is really experiencing some problems you can also click on the **Sys. Cache** tab, and I'd recommend selecting **entire system** then selecting **clear**. Wait till it tells you it's done.



I'd also recommend running the **Prebindings Update** tab as well if problems persist.



These two will free up some disk space on your drive, improve performance and hopefully improve your problems.

The downside is that some applications may need to be re-registered, such as Freehand MX which need to connect to the internet to re-authorise itself. It's a minor hassle, but sometimes the only way to improve the stability of an ailing machine.

3. Drive Genius Lite

Drive Genius lite is an application for some more serious work. Really not designed for your use unless you feel confident after reading the manual. Leave on CD as a backup for someone more skilled to use if needed.